SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION of GOVERNMENTS

Pacific Electric (PE) ROW/West Santa Ana Branch Corridor Alternatives Analysis

Steering Committee Meeting #3

Wednesday, November 10, 2010
1:30 – 3:00 PM

Metro
One Gateway Plaza
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Meeting Summary

Attendees	Organization
Hon. Art Brown	OCTA
Hon. Diane DuBois	Metro
Hon. Scott Larsen	City of Bellflower
Hon. Bruce Barrows	City of Cerritos
Shannon DeLong	City of Downey
Hon. Ralph Rodriguez	City of La Palma
Dan Ojeda	City of Lynwood
Jaime De La Vega	City of Los Angeles
Borja Leon	City of Los Angeles
Hon. Michelle Martinez	City of Santa Ana
Hon. Maria Davila	City of South Gate
Ron Bates	City of South Gate
Hon. Gil Hurtado	Gateway Cities Council of Governments
Hon. Mark Waldman	Orange County Council of Governments
Christy Delp	Orange County Supervisorial District 1
Philip Law	SCAG
Rich Macias	SCAG
Matt Gleason	SCAG
Steve Fox	SCAG
Jon Grace	Metro
Desiree Portillo	Metro
Karen Heit	Gateway Cities COG
Jerry Wood	Gateway Cities COG
Mike Kodama	OLDA
Wendy Garcia	OCTA
Marissa Espino	OCTA
Jim McCarthy	Caltrans, District 7
Deborah Chankin	City of Bellflower
Raul Godinez	City of Santa Ana

Kevin Wilson	City of Vernon
Nancy Michali	AECOM
Bruce Bartel	AECOM
Joel Ayala	AECOM
Katherine Padilla	Katherine Padilla & Associates

Welcome and Introductions

Co-chairs OCTA Director Art Brown and MTA Director Diane DuBois opened the meeting and welcomed committee members. After self-introductions of attendees, the co-chairs reviewed with committee members the Study's purpose: to identify a locally preferred strategy for reuse of the corridor.

P. Law stated the purpose of the meeting: to present the Purpose and Need findings and the results of the Initial Screening evaluation, and to obtain the Committee's input in advance of the community meetings in late November and early December.

Review of Notes from Steering Committee Meeting #2

D. Ojeda asked that the Meeting Notes be corrected to state that he was present at Meeting #2.

Presentation of Initial Screen Results

P. Law stated that the presentation was divided into three key sections: 1) Purpose and Need; 2) The Initial Set of Alternatives; and 3) the Screening Results. The meeting was structured to allow for questions at the end of each section. P. Law emphasized that this information was being provided to the Steering Committee in preparation for, and in advance of, the November –December community meetings. He stated that in January 2011, the community input derived from the community meetings would then be presented to the Steering Committee for their consideration. It was expected that community input would help shape the Committee's input as to which two (2) Alternatives (not including the mandatory TSM and No-Build Alternatives) should then move forward as the Final Alternatives for further, more in-depth study.

P. Law stated that the project team had met with the cities' staff to get their initial input on potential station locations, which was necessary to make assumptions for the initial screening . He also stated that additional meetings with the cities would take place in early 2011 to discussion station locations in more detail. P. Law emphasized the importance of the Purpose and Need findings because the data provides the foundation for identifying the problem the Study must solve, helps the team evaluate possible solutions, and assists the team in identifying the most viable Alternatives for the corridor.

N. Michali then presented provided an overview of the Initial Screening Results, including: the Purpose and Need Findings; the Initial Set of Alternatives, which consisted of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), Streetcar, Light Rail Transit (LRT), Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU), High Speed Rail (conventional and maglev), Transportation System Management (TSM), and No-Build; and the Initial Screening Criteria. She explained that, for comparative purposes, the information would be presented in an "Order of Magnitude" format and that greater detail would be provided for the Final Set of Alternatives. N. Michali also presented information on the Public and Stakeholder Input Process; the Mobility

Assessment, which included estimates of the conceptual ridership, and the cost to build, operate and ride each of the six build alternatives. Possible environmental impacts and the operating and engineering viability of each alternative, along with outstanding engineering issues that would need to be explored as the Alternatives Analysis progresses, was also discussed. N. Michali then summarized all of Initial Screening information that she had presented. She concluded by reviewing the criteria for identifying a Locally Preferred Strategy and the Next Steps of the Study. She stated that the Next Steps would entail the following: The criteria would be used to narrow the current number of six build alternatives (the Initial Set of Alternatives to the Final Set of Alternatives, which is expected to consist of 2-3 build alternatives. The Final Set of Alternatives would then be studied in extensive detail through Fall 2011. The findings would be presented once again to the Steering Committee and the community in public meetings for their review and comment, also in Fall 2011.

Comments and Questions (categorized by topic)

Purpose and Need

- M. Waldman asked what is the width of (the extent) of the corridor that is being studied? N. Michali responded that the study area is approximately four miles in width and over 26 miles long.

Screening Results

- A. Brown asked whether the speed of the High Speed Rail Alternative could be reduced from 120 mph to 95 mph. N. Michali responded that Yes, it could.
- R. Gutierrez asked how conceptual ridership was estimated. N. Michali stated that similar systems currently in operation were used to estimate ridership. She also stated that demographic characteristics, population size, and anticipated destinations, such as work centers and entertainment centers, were also considered.
- R. Gutierrez asked why actual Metrolink ridership figures couldn't be used for Screening Purposes as Metrolink serves a similar corridor? N. Michali explained that Metrolink is not comparable, because riders use it to make a 34+ mile trip from Santa Ana to Downtown Los Angeles, from point to point, with most people going to jobs mostly during peak periods. Whereas, within this corridor, the system that we are studying has higher population density, and it is expected that people would want to circulate within the corridor. The trip purpose is different from those who ride Metrolink and the PEROW/WSAB Corridor would serve a different population, N. Michali stated.
- A member stated that we have seen recent trends of telecommuting and the majority of jobs being created in Orange County by small business. He asked that these trends be taken into consideration.
- A member asked what was the period of time that capital costs were amortized to estimate costs per ride (per Alternative)? N. Michali responded that the costs were amortized over the life of the project, which was typically 30 years for rail systems and 10-15 years for bus systems per FTA standards.
- R. Bates asked whether varying station locations, or adding more station locations, was done to make the High Speed Rail (HSR) Alternative more attractive to cities? N. Michali responded that the HSR would operate at fairly high speeds, thus accommodating very few stations on the

corridor. She stated that for purposes of this study, the project team did assume that stations would be closer than the 10 -20 miles distance that is the current standard between stations with HSR.

- R. Bates suggested that there could be more station stops if they were alternated. For example, if there were a set of 8 station stops, the first HSR train would stop at four, the next one at four different stations, and they could alternate based on the demand. N. Michael responded that there could be different operating options discussed.
- B. Barrows commented that there are maglev systems, specifically in Nagoya, Japan, that operates at a much slower speed (than 150mph), and that it does allow for more station stops. He also stated that technology used in China and Korea allows systems to operate more slowly, which would allow more frequent station stops. He added that if there is a shorter distance between stations, and more stations in general, ridership could be higher and cost to operate would be lower, also, than that estimated in the alternative description for HSR. He stated that there are two technologies, conventional and maglev, "lumped together" in one Alternative, the HSR , and yet they cover a broad spectrum of performance capabilities. A. Brown stated that the OCTA Board of Directors will not consider any Alternative unless it is in current revenue-producing service in the US.
- S. Larsen commented that if the HSR maglev alternative is slowed down to operate at 90 mph, instead of 150 mph, it would still travel twice as fast as the other Alternatives, including light rail, and there could be more station stops. He suggested that the team give a "second look" at operating maglev at 80-90 mph, instead of its top speed. P. Law stated that Metrolink runs about 50 mph, and those stations are 6-7 miles apart, so at 80 -90 mph it may not make the difference suggested, because the Alternative Analysis process looks at a range of factors, including travel market, costs to ride, engineering and operating viability. There are many operational and engineering constraints that would still be applicable to this alternative.
- B. Barrows expressed disagreement with the noise and vibration shown on HSR maglev alternative. He stated that at less than 120 mph, there was no noise and vibration. B. Barrows added that the cities' position is to go with the highest and best technology, and we need to have real numbers of the costs to operate maglev in the US. P. Law commented that the Initial Screening evaluation that the Committee was being presented is the same information that community members would receive at the upcoming Community Meetings, which would begin in the week following the Steering Committee Meeting. He stated that the Initial Screening evaluation was performed on the Initial Set of Alternatives that the Steering Committee had concurred with at their previous meeting, and he cautioned that it would not be possible to provide in-depth analysis of another alternative such as slow speed maglev at the upcoming community meetings.
- M. Martinez stated that "we need to have vision on where to get the money (to build a system." Technologies will change, and they might not be relevant 20 -25 years down the road, she stated. She suggested that the Committee keep the future in mind and be cognizant of what direction we will take on any type of alternatives in order to connect Orange County.
- There were questions regarding the availability and amount of funding to build a new system. A. Brown responded that we are asking not answering that question in our study yet, we are simply trying to see if it's feasible to use this corridor. N. Michali stated that the project team

will develop a financial plan as part of this Alternatives Analysis, so the question of how to pay for a new system will be answered later.

- A member commented that the Bristol Street Project (in Santa Ana) was "on the books for three decades. You set a plan in motion and then you will get it eventually in a funding cycle. The main thing does it work and is there support for it?"
- D. DuBois asked for clarification as to why the BRT alternative would not be able to accommodate riders in Huntington Park, South Gate and Vernon? N. Michali responded that there are two BRT alignment options and if the BRT were to operate in the High Occupancy Vehicle lanes on the I-105 Freeway, instead of using streets to connect to Union Station under consideration, those communities with high transit dependent ridership would "miss out."

Environmental Impacts

- R. Gutierrez asked where were the possible property acquisition sites described in the Screening Process located? N. Michali stated that they are assumed to be in Los Angeles County. She further clarified that the figures are preliminary estimates subject to change when the exact location of stations were determined. She explained that work sessions would be held later in the Study with each city to discuss what would work best in terms of the details of the station locations.
- R. Bates asked that if the alignment connects at First and Alameda (to the Regional Connector) instead of Union Station, how will ridership numbers be affected? N. Michali responded that there may be fewer riders, but that Union Station was starting to reach its capacity in terms of system connections, so that another option would be to connect to the Regional Connector at First and Alameda. She mentioned that the Study would continue to explore other options.
- R. Bates stated that he knew that N. Michali had extensive experience with Corridor Alternatives Analyses. He asked whether any corridor in her professional experience had displayed such strong preliminary potential ridership figures? N. Michali said that no other corridor had demonstrated such high ridership potential.
- A member asked why it would be necessary to interface with Metrolink at the northern end of the corridor (to connect to Union Station)? P. Law stated that it may not be necessary; the point that was important was that each possible way to connect to Union Station at the northern end of the corridor faced significant challenges, as did the southern corridor connection to Santa Ana Regional Transportation Center.
- C. Delp asked how below-grade utilities might be affected in Orange County. She commented that, due to the quantity and proximity of intersections, an at-grade alternative might not be viable. N. Michali stated that typically underground utilities would have to be relocated to accommodate a below-grade alternative. She also said that even an above-grade alternative could require below-grade utilities to be relocated –or placed in a box–because of the need for supporting columns for the aerial system.
- S. Larsen remarked that if we don't use an at-grade alternative, then we would have more opportunities for a walking path, and could design developments that would bring people into stations. He stated that above-grade alternatives open up more grade level areas for many different uses that can be controlled and planned at the local level .
- R. Bates suggested that at- grade alternatives may make sense in industrialized areas and it would keep project costs down. He commented that if we can put together a project that would

cost less than $4 billon, with this kind of (ridership) demand, based on the demographic figures (from the Purpose and Need) , "it should create some attention from Metro, OCTA and FTA."

- M. Waldman asked if the Committee was being asked "to whittle the alternatives down today?" P. Law responded that the Committee would be asked to provide that advice at the next meeting, and that they would have a chance to review community meeting input first before advising the project team.
- A member also reported that two Orange County Supervisors have stated that they wish this system to be subterranean. A. Brown responded that it would be very costly.
- A. Brown announced that this was his last meeting and that he had enjoyed working with all of the Steering Committee members.

Next Steps

P. Law stated that the project team would ask attendees at community meetings held in November and December 2010 to identify which alternatives they prefer to be studied further and would best meet their needs. He reiterated that In February 2011, the project team would meet first with the Technical Advisory Committee to present the community meeting results, and then the team would meet again with the Steering Committee to discuss recommendations for the Final Set of Alternatives.